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Orcs (TTRPG)

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Witcher TTRPG Homebrew Collection

"The peasantry takes one look at the tusks, the green skin, and the sheer, hulking mass of them, and screams 'Monster!' But any veteran commander will tell you the truth. If an Orc signs a contract to hold a bridge, he will hold that bridge until his heart stops beating. They do not break parley, they do not strike a surrendering foe, and they do not flee. In a world full of treacherous kings and backstabbing mages, an Orc's word is the only true iron left on the Continent."

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Lore & Background

To the uneducated masses of the North, Orcs are merely half-civilized brutes, lumped in with trolls and goblins as savage raiders. But their true history is far more complex and tragic.

Orcs are a fading, martial race. As revealed in ancient southern texts, they are actually "post-elves," biologically engineered centuries ago by the Aen Nílfe (the founders of the Golden Empire) to be the perfect, honorable warriors. However, their innate sense of honor ultimately caused them to rebel against their elven creators, as they could not stomach the slaughter and subjugation of defenseless beings. They allied with the very creatures they were meant to police—like goblins—and broke away to form their own warbands.

By 1272 AR, true Orcs are nearly extinct. Their strict adherence to a martial code of honor has left them vulnerable in a world dominated by human treachery. Today, the few remaining Orcs and half-orcs live on the margins of society, operating as elite vanguard mercenaries, free trappers, or heavy bodyguards.

Physical Characteristics

An Orc's physiology was designed for absolute martial dominance.

- **Build:** They are massively muscled and broad-shouldered, typically standing well over 6 feet tall and weighing over 250 pounds.
- **Facial Features:** They possess heavy, squared jaws, often with prominent lower canines or tusks. Their elven ancestry is buried deep, occasionally visible only in a slight point to their ears.
- **Skin Tone:** Their thick, durable skin ranges from muted greens and olive-greys to earthy browns.

Naming Conventions

Orc names are sharp, heavy, and guttural, lacking the flowing melodies of their ancient elven creators. They often adopt titles or clan names based on their warband or the weapon they master.

- **Examples:** Grom, Thraka, Durok, Varg, Grosh, Kael.

Race Mechanics: Orc

When creating an Orc, your social standing is highly conditional, swinging wildly depending on who you are talking to. Common folk view you with **Hate & Fear**, but military commanders and Elderfolk afford you a baseline of **Tolerance** or even **Equality** due to your predictable, ironclad code of honor.

Orcs possess the following Racial Perks:

Original Perks

As put forth by Zekono

Big'n Bulky

+1 to BODY (May go over 10, maximum 11)

Honorable

+1 to Courage.

Fighter

+1 to Brawling.

Reimagined Perks

As put forth by Adalwulf of Aedirn

Big'n Bulky

Engineered to serve as the ultimate shock troops, Orc physiology possesses a baseline of raw, physical power that surpasses human limits.

- **Effect:** You gain an inherent +1 to your **BODY** stat. Additionally, your maximum possible starting BODY stat is increased from 10 to 11.

Honorable

An Orc's mind is hardwired for martial discipline. They will not break a signed parley, violate a flag of truce, or abandon a sworn shield-brother.

- **Effect:** Because your convictions are absolute, you gain an inherent +1 bonus to your **Courage** skill. You are highly resistant to magical or mundane fear effects that would cause you to break ranks or flee a battle.

Born Fighter

Whether trained in a mercenary camp or surviving in the feral wilds alongside goblin bands, an Orc is naturally inclined toward close-quarters combat.

- **Effect:** You gain an inherent +1 bonus to your **Brawling** skill.

Regional Social Standing Table

Because Orcs are a fading, martial race caught between a reputation for primal savagery and a rigid dedication to martial law, their social status is highly conditional. Common folk fear their size and history as raiders, while military commanders and older races afford them a grumbling, conditional text-level tolerance due to their predictable code of honor.

Territory	Humans	Elves	Dwarves	Witchers	Mages
The North	Hated & Feared	Tolerated	Tolerated	Wary & Feared	Tolerated
Nilfgaard	Tolerated	Tolerated	Tolerated	Wary	Tolerated
Skellige	Equal	Tolerated	Tolerated	Tolerated	Tolerated

Dol Blathanna	Hostile	Equal	Tolerated	Wary	Tolerated
Mahakam	Tolerated	Tolerated	Equal	Wary	Tolerated

Roleplaying an Orc in 1272 AR

In the North & Nilfgaard

Your life is a dichotomy. To the average Northern peasant, you are indistinguishable from a monstrous beast, and you will be met with pitchforks and terror. However, city watch captains and mercenary bands will actively seek you out for high-paying contracts, knowing your word is unbreakable. In Nilfgaard, your race has been entirely subjugated; the Empire tolerates you only as highly specialized, strictly regulated military assets, often used as disposable heavy shock troops under the watchful eyes of Imperial mages.

Among Skelligers

Equal. Skellige is perhaps the only human realm where you are judged purely by your strength and your honor. The Islanders respect a warrior who fights head-on and keeps their oaths. You will find a surprising amount of camaraderie in the taverns of Ard Skellig, provided you can hold your liquor and win a fistfight.

Among Elderfolk

Dwarves deeply value your adherence to martial law and codes of honor, readily accepting you as shield-brothers in tunnel fights (*Equal* in Mahakam). Elves, particularly the Scoia'tael, view you with a tragic kinship (*Equal* in Dol Blathanna)—you are another proud, ancient race driven to the brink of extinction by human expansion.

Among Witchers

Wary. A Witcher knows you are a sapient humanoid, not a monster, meaning you are exempt from the Path's contracts. However, because your kind occasionally forms warbands alongside unpredictable Trolls and Goblins, a Witcher will always keep a close hand on their steel sword when approaching your camp,

waiting to see if you are an honorable mercenary or a feral raider.

Notes

- This race was created by Reddit user Zekono from whom I received express permission for the inclusion of this homebrew race. All credit for this race and the data included with them is theirs. For the newly updated source see link.
    - The following parts are expansions by Adalwulf of Aedirn: The foreword, the Lore & Background section, the Reimagined Perks section and the Roleplaying a Orc in 1272 AR section.

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